

IN THE CLAIMS

1. (currently amended) A digital signal processing apparatus, comprising:

transmitting means for transmitting inquiry information to an information center over a communication line, ~~said inquiry information being generated by using at least a part of including a particular frame of music data extracted from encoded digital data that have been recorded on a storage medium, said inquiry information being used to indicate whether the digital data was encoded or recorded in a manner consistent with the digital signal processing apparatus;~~

receiving means for receiving a result of an inquiry conducted by said information center based on said inquiry information, the result of the inquiry indicating whether the extracted particular frame of music data matches a corresponding frame of music data stored in the information center, the stored frame of music data being encoded or recorded in a manner consistent with the digital signal processing apparatus, the extracted particular frame of music data matching the stored frame of music data only when the encoded digital data recorded on the storage medium was encoded or recorded in the manner consistent with the digital signal processing apparatus;

discriminating means for judging, based on said result of said inquiry, whether said encoded digital data recorded on said storage medium are was encoded or recorded in the manner consistent with the digital signal processing apparatus and thus legally purchased data; and

controlling means for executing which, when in response to said discriminating means judges said encoded digital

data to be legally purchased data, ~~executes~~ a process to offer an additional service to said customer,

~~wherein~~ said additional service offered to said customer by said controlling means including:

moving said encoded digital data from said storage medium to another storage medium, +

restoring said encoded digital data onto said storage medium if the encoded digital data has been partially destroyed, + and

converting said encoded digital data recorded on said storage medium into encoded digital data of a different bit rate before replacing unconverted digital data with converted digital data on said storage medium.

2. (cancelled)

3. (previously presented) The digital signal processing apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said additional service is offered to said customer by said controlling means converting said encoded digital data recorded on said storage medium with an algorithm of a predetermined version into digital data having undergone encoding with an algorithm of a more advanced version, before replacing unconverted digital data with converted digital data on said storage medium.

4. - 5. (cancelled)

6. (previously presented) The digital signal processing apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said additional service offered to said customer comprises furnishing said customer, free of charge, with a product related to a producing party who produces said digital data purchased legally by said customer from said information center.

7. (previously presented) The digital signal processing apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising inputting means for inputting identification information for identifying

said encoded digital data that are subject to said inquiry, wherein said identification information input through said inputting means is transmitted to said information center over said communication line.

8. (currently amended) The digital signal processing apparatus according to claim 7, wherein said information center comprises:

receiving means for receiving said inquiry information and said identification information ~~for identifying said encoded digital data that are subject to said inquiry transmitted from said encoded digital signal processing apparatus;~~

retrieving means for retrieving ~~said digital data subject to said inquiry from said received inquiry from said information center in association with said identification information for identifying said encoded the retrieved digital data subject to the inquiry including the extracted particular frame of music data;~~

reference inquiry information generating means for generating reference inquiry information corresponding to in association with said retrieved encoded digital data subject to the inquiry, the generated reference inquiry information including the stored frame of music data ~~retrieved by said retrieving means;~~

comparing means for comparing ~~said the generated reference inquiry information and the retrieved digital data subject to the inquiry generated by said reference inquiry information received by said receiving means;~~

inquiry result generating means for generating ~~an~~
the result of the inquiry result based on a result of
the comparison by said comparing means; and

means for transmitting ~~said the result of the~~
inquiry result generated by to said digital processing
apparatus ~~inquiry result generating means.~~

9. (cancelled)

10. (previously presented) The digital signal processing apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising charging means for processing charges; wherein, when said discriminating means judges that said encoded digital data recorded on said storage medium are legally purchased data, said charging means charges one of nothing and a reduced amount on to said customer for said additional service offered to said customer.

11. (currently amended) A digital signal processing method, ~~comprising the steps of:~~

transmitting identification information and inquiry information to an information center over a communication line, said identification information identifying encoded digital data that have been recorded on a storage medium ~~and that are to be transmitted from said terminal device,~~ said inquiry information ~~being generated using at least a part of~~ including a particular frame of music data extracted from said encoded digital eneeded data, ~~said inquiry information being used to indicate whether the digital data was encoded or recorded in a manner consistent with the digital signal processing method;~~

receiving a result of an inquiry conducted by said information center based on said inquiry information, the result of the inquiry indicating whether the extracted particular frame of music data matches a corresponding frame of music data stored in the information center, the stored frame of music data being encoded or recorded in a

manner consistent with the digital signal processing method, the extracted particular frame of music data matching the stored frame of music data only when the encoded digital data recorded on the storage medium was encoded or recorded in the manner consistent with the digital signal processing method;

judging, based on said result of said inquiry, whether said encoded digital data recorded on said storage medium ~~are~~ was encoded or recorded in the manner consistent with the digital signal processing method and thus legally purchased data; and

executing, in response to when ~~said~~ encoded digital data ~~are~~ being judged to be legally purchased data, ~~executing~~ a process of offering an additional service to said customer,

~~wherein~~ said additional service offered to said customer includinges:

moving said encoded digital data from said storage medium to another storage medium, +

restoring said encoded digital data onto said storage medium if the encoded digital data has been partially destroyed, + and

converting said encoded digital data recorded on said storage medium into encoded digital data of a different bit rate before replacing unconverted digital data with converted digital data on said storage medium.

12. (cancelled)

13. (previously presented) The digital signal processing method according to claim 11, wherein said additional service offered to said customer comprises converting said encoded digital data recorded on said storage medium into encoded digital data encoded with an algorithm of a predetermined

version, before replacing unconverted digital data with converted digital data on said storage medium.

14. - 15. (cancelled)

16. (previously presented) The digital signal processing method according to claim 11, wherein said additional service offered to said customer comprises furnishing said customer, free of charge, with a product related to a producing party who produced said digital data purchased legally by said customer from said information center.

17. (previously presented) The digital signal processing method according to claim 11, further comprising the step of inputting said identification information for identifying said encoded digital data to said inquiry, wherein said identification information input in said inputting step is transmitted to said information center over said communication line.

18. - 28. (cancelled)